

Director Damon Arnold

As director of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Dr. Damon T. Arnold oversees an agency comprised of more than 1,100 employees who are responsible for protecting the state's 12.4 million residents, as well as countless visitors, through the prevention and control of disease and injury. The agency operates out of headquarters in Springfield and Chicago, seven regional offices and three laboratories and its 200 programs touch virtually every age, aspect and cycle of life.

Dr. Arnold was named the 16th director of the Illinois Department of Public Health on October 1, 2007 by Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich.

Prior to his appointment, Dr. Arnold was the medical director for bioterrorism and preparedness for the Chicago Department of Public Health. He has served in the Army National Guard for 23 years, holds the rank of colonel and, currently, is the guard's commander of the Joint Task Force Medical Command in Springfield and the Illinois State Surgeon.

Dr. Arnold received his M.D. and M.P.H. degrees from the University of Illinois, and has completed several law courses at DePaul University College of Law. He began his career in public service by volunteering nearly 2,000 hours of community service during high school, taking care of hospitalized patient's needs.

Over the years, he has had a distinguished military career and received many military awards, including Army Commendation, National Defense Service and Humanitarian Service medals. He has served missions to Iraq, Kuwait, Central America, South America, Africa and Europe, as well as participated in relief efforts for hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He was the American Red Cross Military Hero of the Year for 2007.

Dr. Arnold has served in the role of a medical director for St. Francis Hospital, Blue Island, Illinois; LTV Steel Company in Indiana; and Mercy Hospital and Medical Center, Chicago.

He has received training and certification in holistic medicine, for massage therapy and acupuncture, and the martial arts. He currently lives with his wife Sharon Johnson-Arnold in Chicago.